



The Influence of Peer Attachment on Self-efficacy of Junior High School Students

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the influence of peer attachment on the self-efficacy of seventh-grade students at SMP Negeri 12 Tasikmalaya. Peer attachment refers to an individual's emotional bond with peers, while self-efficacy is the students' belief in their ability to face various challenges. This study uses a quantitative approach with a correlational method. The research population consists of all seventh-grade students from classes A to K at SMP Negeri 12 Tasikmalaya, totaling 373 students. The sampling technique used is probability sampling, specifically simple random sampling, with a sample size of 310 students. Hypothesis testing was conducted using Pearson Product Moment correlation analysis with the assistance of the SPSS version 22 for Windows program. The results of the study indicate that: (1) in general, students' peer attachment is in the low category at 46.45%, which means that most students have a low attachment to their peers; (2) students' self-efficacy is also in the low category at 64.19%, indicating a still low level of self-confidence in facing challenges; and (3) the correlation analysis results show a coefficient value of 0.168 with an influence contribution of 2.8%. This indicates a very weak positive relationship between peer attachment and self-efficacy of seventh-grade students at SMP Negeri 12 Tasikmalaya.

KATA KUNCI

Kelekatan Teman;
Efikasi Diri;
Siswa SMP;

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui pengaruh peer attachment terhadap self-efficacy siswa kelas Satu SMP Negeri 12 Tasikmalaya. Peer attachment merupakan ikatan emosional individu dengan teman sebaya, sedangkan self-efficacy merupakan keyakinan siswa terhadap kemampuan yang dimilikinya untuk menghadapi berbagai tantangan. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan metode korelasional. Populasi penelitian adalah seluruh siswa kelas Satu SMP Negeri 12 Tasikmalaya sebanyak 373 siswa. Teknik pengambilan sampel menggunakan probability sampling jenis simple random sampling dengan jumlah sampel 310 siswa. Uji hipotesis dilakukan menggunakan analisis korelasi Pearson Product Moment dengan bantuan program SPSS versi 22 for Windows. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa: (1) secara umum, peer attachment siswa berada pada kategori rendah sebesar 46,45%, yang berarti sebagian besar siswa memiliki keterikatan yang rendah dengan teman sebaya; (2) self-efficacy siswa juga berada pada kategori rendah sebesar 64,19%, menunjukkan keyakinan diri yang masih rendah dalam menghadapi tantangan; dan (3) hasil analisis korelasi menunjukkan nilai koefisien sebesar 0,168 dengan kontribusi pengaruh sebesar 2,8%. Hal ini menunjukkan adanya hubungan positif yang sangat lemah antara peer attachment dan self-efficacy siswa.

1. INTRODUCTION

Adolescence, especially at the junior high school level, is an important period marked by complex social, emotional, and cognitive changes. According to Santrock (Karimah & Pratama, 2024), adolescents tend to form closer relationships with peers than with parents, suggesting that peer relationships have a significant influence on identity formation and social adjustment. At this stage, not all adolescents can carry out their developmental tasks

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optimally; some experience difficulties in socializing, low self-confidence, and an inability to express their opinions independently (Izzani et al., 2024). This phenomenon highlights the need to strengthen a crucial psychological aspect, namely self-efficacy, which plays a role in helping adolescents face various developmental challenges (Safitri, 2021).

According to Bandura (2017), self-efficacy is an individual's belief in their ability to organize and carry out the actions necessary to achieve their goals. Individuals with high self-efficacy tend to cope with pressure, complete tasks effectively, and remain optimistic in the face of various challenges. Utami & Haryati (2023) state that an individual's self-efficacy contributes to success. People who are confident in their academic abilities expect to earn high exam scores and secure good jobs, thereby achieving personal and professional prosperity. Conversely, people who lack confidence in their academic abilities imagine that they will get low scores before starting the exam. Allen's research (Delgado et al., 2022) shows that secure attachment to parents helps foster regular and harmonious emotional experiences in peer relationships.

Other research also confirms that self-efficacy influences the ability to think positively, handle problems, and achieve academic success (Widya & Muwakhidah, 2021). However, observations from PLP II at SMP Negeri 12 Tasikmalaya indicate low self-efficacy among some first-year students, characterized by shyness when speaking in front of the class, dependence on the group, and limited basic skills, such as reading. These conditions reinforce the urgency of examining the factors that influence student self-efficacy.

One important external factor that influences the development of self-efficacy is peer attachment, which is the bond between students and their peers that includes trust, communication, and emotional support (Armsden & Greenberg, 1987). Bowlby (1988) emphasizes that secure attachment is the basis for the formation of self-confidence and emotional well-being. Research by Sinaga & Rusman (2024) shows that low self-efficacy can hinder students' social relationships, while positive peer attachment can increase motivation, social maturity, and psychological well-being. In line with the research (Ramida & Sakti, 2022), there is a positive relationship between peer attachment and adolescent social maturity; the higher the attachment to peers, the higher the social maturity. However, research on the influence of peer attachment on self-efficacy among junior high school students in Tasikmalaya remains limited. Therefore, this research is essential to determine the influence of peer attachment on the self-efficacy of first-year students at SMP Negeri 12 Tasikmalaya, as well as to serve as a basis for developing guidance and counseling services, such as group guidance, to strengthen peer attachment and increase student self-efficacy.

According to Lachine et al. (2020), self-efficacy is operationally defined as an individual's belief in their ability to perform a specific task and achieve a predetermined goal. Self-efficacy is an essential aspect of adolescent development, especially in academic and social contexts. Bandura (2017) emphasizes that self-efficacy influences how individuals think, feel, and act. Research by Susanto (Mustika et al., 2023) shows that students with high self-confidence are more confident in mastering academic problems and can act effectively. Research by Widya & Muwakhidah (2021) found that adolescents with high self-efficacy tend to think positively and handle problems effectively, while Amalia et al. (2018) emphasized that self-efficacy is associated with overcoming learning difficulties.

On the other hand, research on peer attachment underscores the importance of positive peer relationships in supporting adolescents' emotional well-being and motivation. Armsden & Greenberg (1987) proposed three critical dimensions of peer attachment: trust, communication, and alienation. In addition, research by Moradi & Mardani (2024) consistently shows that healthy peer relationships increase social maturity and academic motivation. This indicates a strong link between peer attachment and self-efficacy as two important psychological variables in adolescent development. Neufeld (Simanjorang et al., 2024) argues that peer attachment plays a vital role in determining adolescent behavior and self-perception. Individuals who have positive relationships with peers can provide strong social support.

However, most previous studies have emphasized the influence of internal factors such as intrinsic motivation, parenting styles, and self-esteem on student self-efficacy. The research by Purwandari & Khoirunnisa (2023) emphasizes the importance of the relationship between teachers and students in shaping students' self-confidence, and that parental support significantly increases self-efficacy. Few studies have specifically examined peer attachment as a determinant of self-efficacy, especially in local contexts such as junior high school students in the Tasikmalaya area. In fact, social dynamics and the characteristics of the school friendship environment can differ across regions, so a more in-depth study is needed to examine how peer attachment directly affects self-efficacy in early adolescence. Human achievement depends on a person's behavior, beliefs, and environmental conditions (Pertiwi & Fauzi, 2022).

Existing research has extensively examined the role of self-efficacy in students' academic achievement and psychological well-being, as well as exploring external factors such as parenting styles, teacher-student relationships, and motivation. However, research on the specific role of peer attachment in influencing self-efficacy remains limited, especially at the junior high school level. Another gap lies in the lack of research on low self-efficacy in regional schools, as observed in the PLP II at SMP Negeri 12 Tasikmalaya, which showed students' low ability to express opinions, dependence on groups, and feelings of isolation. Therefore, research is needed to gain a more detailed understanding of how the quality of peer relationships affects students' self-confidence in educational contexts. To fill this gap, this study offers a distinction by explicitly focusing on the influence of peer attachment on self-efficacy among early adolescent students in the Tasikmalaya area. The novelty of this study lies in integrating attachment theory (Bowlby, 1988) with the concept of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997) in the context of school guidance and counseling. This study not only examines the relationship between variables but also presents practical relevance as a basis for developing group guidance services. In addition, this study is unique in that it examines empirical phenomena occurring at SMP Negeri 12 Tasikmalaya, thereby contributing new insights to the literature, which has thus far focused more on populations in urban areas or elite schools.

This study specifically focuses on three main aspects of peer attachment—trust, communication, and alienation—and on how these three contribute to the dimensions of self-efficacy, namely level, strength, and generality (Bandura, 1995). By examining the relationship between these two variables, this study aims to provide an empirical description that can help guidance counselors understand the social factors that influence students' self-confidence in the learning process, strengthening understanding of the relationship between peer attachment and self-efficacy in early adolescence. This study expands on previous findings by providing empirical evidence in a local context that has not been widely researched. Theoretically, this study enriches the guidance and counseling literature by showing that peer attachment not only affects emotional well-being but also is a crucial factor in the development of students' academic self-confidence. This study also emphasizes the relevance of attachment theory and social cognitive theory in explaining adolescent psychosocial development. The study contributes to the field of school guidance and counseling by offering recommendations for interventions to improve student self-efficacy. The findings of this study can serve as a basis for designing group guidance services, basic services, and responsive services that foster peer attachment and strengthen student self-confidence, as suggested by Suhertina (2014). Interventions such as role-playing (Istiqomah, 2023) can also help students develop social, communication, and self-confidence skills through direct group experiences.

The purpose and focus of this study is to analyze the effect of peer attachment on the self-efficacy of seventh-grade students at SMP Negeri 12 Tasikmalaya, focusing on the level of students' emotional attachment to their peers, the level of students' belief in their own abilities, and the relationship between these two variables as a basis for strengthening guidance and counseling services at school.

2. METHOD

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a quantitative approach using a simple regression design. This design was chosen because the study aimed to determine whether peer attachment, as the independent variable (X), affects self-efficacy, the dependent variable (Y), among students at SMP Negeri 12 Tasikmalaya. A correlational design allows researchers to objectively analyze the strength and direction of relationships between variables using numerical data and statistical analysis.

2.2 Subject

The research was conducted at SMP Negeri 12 Tasikmalaya, located on Jl. Perintis Kemerdekaan, Tasikmalaya City, West Java Province. The study took place in 2025. The study population included all first-year students at SMP Negeri 12 Tasikmalaya, totaling 373 students. This population was chosen because early adolescents (ages 12–13) are relevant to the study's focus on peer attachment and self-efficacy. The sampling technique used was simple random sampling. Based on a 5% margin of error, the minimum required sample was 176 students. However, during data collection, questionnaires were distributed to the entire population, and 310 students completed them fully. Therefore, the data analyzed in this study consisted of 310 students as research subjects.

2.3 Data Collection

Data were collected using Likert-scale questionnaires to measure peer attachment and self-efficacy among first-year students at SMP Negeri 12 Tasikmalaya. The self-efficacy instrument was developed based on Bandura's theory (1997) and divided into three dimensions: level, strength, and generality. The peer attachment instrument was based on Armsden & Greenberg's theory (1987) and included the dimensions of trust, communication, and alienation. The questionnaires included instructions, respondent identification, and statement items, and were distributed alongside a pilot test to assess validity.

2.4 Data Analysis

Data were analyzed quantitatively using SPSS. The analysis began with a normality test using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test to ensure that each variable's data were normally distributed. Once normality was confirmed, simple linear regression analysis was conducted to determine the extent to which peer attachment affects self-efficacy. This analysis measured both the strength and direction of the relationship between the variables and assessed statistical significance.

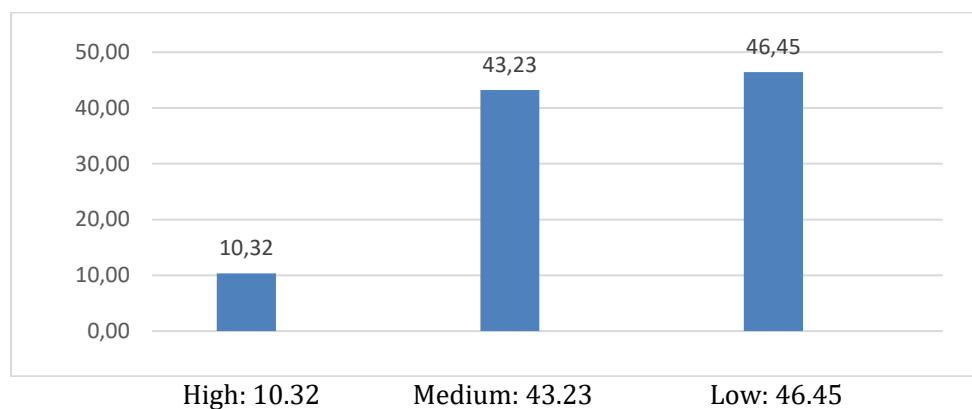
2.5 Research Procedure

The preparation stage involved identifying important, researchable problems using primary and secondary sources. These problems were used to develop the research background and subsequently documented in the research proposal. During the implementation stage, a pilot test of 53 instrument items was conducted to assess readability, validity, and reliability. Once the instruments were confirmed to be clear, valid, and reliable, they were distributed to the selected sample using Google Forms. The responses from the 53 peer attachment and self-efficacy items were then processed to examine the influence of peer attachment on self-efficacy, providing a basis for designing school counseling programs. The study was conducted from start to finish and included appendices and a hypothetical program plan..

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Results

The questionnaire data provided a general overview of peer attachment among students at SMPN 12 Tasikmalaya, with an average of 50.39% falling into the moderate category. Students in the high category, with a percentage of 10.32%, numbered 32; those in the moderate category, with a percentage of 43.23%, numbered 134; and those in the low category, with a percentage of 46.45%, numbered 144. The following is a graph of peer attachment among students at SMPN 12 Tasikmalaya.

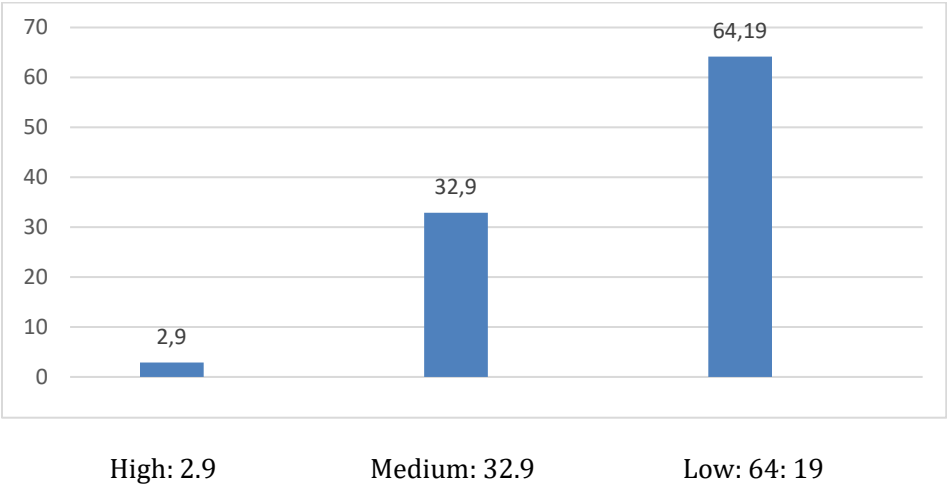


Graph 1. Overview of student peer attachment.

The analysis shows that more students have low peer attachment than moderate, indicating that most students at SMPN 12 Tasikmalaya, especially those in the first grade, have low peer attachment.

The questionnaire data show that students' overall self-efficacy at SMPN 12 Tasikmalaya is 50.56% and falls in the moderate category. There were 8 students in the high category (2.90%), 102 students in the moderate category

(32.90%), and 199 students in the low category (64.19%). The following is a graph of students' self-efficacy at SMPN 12 Tasikmalaya.



Graph 1. Overview of student self-efficacy

Based on the results of a simple linear regression analysis examining the effect of peer attachment on self-efficacy among students at SMP Negeri 12 Tasikmalaya using IBM SPSS Statistics version 22, the findings are as follows:

Table 1. Correlation Test of Peer Attachment and Self-Efficacy

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.168	.028	.025	11.338

Predictors: (Constant), PA

The results show an R value of 0.168, indicating a low correlation between peer attachment and self-efficacy. The R Square value of 0.028 (2.8%) means that peer attachment accounts for 2.8% of the variance in self-efficacy, while the remaining 97.2% is influenced by other factors. This suggests that the higher a student's peer attachment, the higher their self-efficacy tends to be.

Table 2. Simple Linear Regression Test of Peer Attachment on Self-Efficacy

Coefficients				
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
1	B	Std. Error	Beta	
	(Constant)	50.652	2.775	
	PA	0.130	0.043	0.168

Dependent Variable: Self-Efficacy

The regression output indicates that the constant (a) is 50.652, meaning that if peer attachment is zero, the predicted self-efficacy score would be 50.652. The coefficient (b) for peer attachment is 0.130, which means that for every one-point increase in peer attachment, self-efficacy is expected to increase by 0.130 points.

3.2. Discussion

The findings of this study reveal that students with high levels of peer attachment can optimally achieve the three dimensions of peer attachment: trust, communication, and alienation. Trust refers to students' belief that their peers can understand and respect their needs and desires. Communication relates to adolescents' perceptions of their peers' sensitivity and responsiveness to their emotional state, as well as the quality of closeness they experience with friends. Alienation, on the other hand, refers to feelings of isolation, anger, or estrangement in peer

relationships. These three dimensions reflect adolescents' behavioral patterns in relation to their peers (Armsden & Greenberg, 1987).

Research by Astuti and Pratama (2020) also emphasizes that self-efficacy is positively and significantly related to communication skills. Self-efficacy is an individual's confidence in their ability to perform tasks. When students' self-efficacy increases, their communication skills improve, enabling them to express themselves confidently and maximize their potential.

Similarly, Mudzikyyah (2022) found that peer attachment and academic self-efficacy significantly affect well-being among pesantren students, with an effect size of 52.3%. The higher the students' attachment to peers and academic self-efficacy, the better their overall adjustment in the pesantren environment. Larasati and Firman (2025) also note that strong peer bonds create a safe space for students to share ideas and receive feedback. Positive peer feedback enhances confidence and helps students understand their progress, while supportive peer relationships reduce stress and anxiety. Likewise, Listiani (Somad et al., 2022) states that students in a positive peer environment develop good relationships characterized by communication, trust, and social support.

Karimah and Pratama (2024) report that higher peer attachment is associated with greater student engagement among boarding school students, suggesting a significant relationship between the two. Similarly, Medelin and Alwi (2023) show that students with secure peer attachment experience lower academic stress, while those with insecure-avoidant attachment have the highest stress levels. This highlights the importance of fostering secure peer attachment to prevent the adverse effects of academic stress.

The present findings indicate that peer attachment significantly influences middle school students' self-efficacy. Positive peer relationships provide emotional security, social support, and acceptance, which are critical during early adolescence. Warm, trusting, and communicative friendships allow students to receive positive feedback, encouragement, and adaptive behavioral models. These conditions contribute to students' confidence in their abilities to handle academic tasks and social demands in school, aligning with adolescent development theories that emphasize peers as a key factor in shaping self-concept and self-efficacy.

Conversely, low-quality peer attachment can negatively affect self-efficacy. Students who lack emotional support from peers tend to doubt their abilities, withdraw socially, and show less initiative in learning activities. This can hinder their overall academic and social development. Therefore, schools must pay serious attention to the quality of peer relationships to create a healthy, supportive, and conducive learning environment that fosters students' self-confidence.

In this context, the role of guidance and counseling services becomes crucial, as counselors play a strategic role in helping students develop positive, functional peer attachments. Through individual counseling (Novianti, 2024; Hartini et al., 2024), group guidance (Safitri et al., 2025), and classroom-based guidance (Hanysha et al., 2025), counselors can facilitate the development of social skills, empathy, assertive communication, and constructive conflict resolution. Guidance and counseling services also serve a preventive and developmental function, aiming to prevent social-emotional issues that could undermine self-efficacy. Strengthening these services in schools is therefore not merely supportive but essential for helping middle school students grow into confident, adaptive individuals capable of navigating developmental challenges effectively.

4. RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

The theoretical implications of this study strengthen the body of research in guidance and counseling, emphasizing the relevance of attachment theory and self-efficacy in understanding adolescent development. Practically, the study contributes to school guidance and counseling by providing intervention recommendations that can be implemented to enhance students' self-efficacy. From a managerial perspective, the findings can serve as a basis for designing group counseling services, foundational services, or responsive interventions that focus on developing peer attachment and strengthening students' self-confidence. Methodologically, this study integrates a quantitative approach to analyze the influence of peer attachment on students' self-efficacy. Future research could expand the variables studied and implement group counseling interventions to improve middle school adolescents' self-efficacy further.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the research findings, data analysis, and hypothesis testing, the overall level of peer attachment among first-grade students at SMPN 12 Tasikmalaya falls within the moderate category. This indicates that most students have formed fairly positive relationships with their peers, reflected in mutual trust, adequate emotional

closeness, and relatively open communication. However, the moderate level also suggests that these peer relationships are not yet fully optimal and may still fluctuate, particularly when students face interpersonal conflicts or emotional challenges typical of early adolescence.

The results also show that students' self-efficacy is generally moderate. This finding suggests that students possess a basic level of confidence in their ability to complete academic and non-academic tasks, yet this confidence is not consistently strong across situations. Students may still experience self-doubt when encountering academic difficulties, social pressures, or unfamiliar challenges. Therefore, reinforcement through structured guidance, positive feedback, and supportive learning environments is needed to help students strengthen their belief in their own capabilities and become more resilient in pursuing personal and academic goals.

Furthermore, the study confirms that peer attachment has a positive, statistically significant influence on students' self-efficacy, although the relationship is very weak ($R = 0.168$). Peer attachment accounts for 2.8% of the variance in self-efficacy, indicating that while peer relationships play a role in shaping students' confidence, self-efficacy is also influenced by many other factors. Nevertheless, this finding underscores the importance of supportive and healthy peer interactions in fostering students' confidence and motivation. Future research is recommended to include additional psychological and environmental variables and to implement group counseling or peer-based interventions to enhance self-efficacy among middle school students more comprehensively.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

All authors discussed the results and contributed to the final manuscript. Each author participated in drafting the original text, collecting and interpreting data, formulating conclusions and recommendations, and preparing the scientific article. All contributions were made collaboratively throughout the writing process.

DECLARATION OF COMPETING INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this study.

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